

VZCZCXRO3186

PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHDA RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHFL RUEHIK RUEHKW RUEHLA  
RUEHLN RUEHLZ RUEHNP RUEHPOD RUEHROV RUEHRS RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHTI #0350 1591345  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 081345Z JUN 09  
FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8182  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2500  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0822  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS TIRANA 000350

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EUR/SCE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KDEM](#) [PREL](#) [AL](#)

SUBJECT: Media Coverage of USG-Financed Poll Follows Partisan  
Lines

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: As expected, media coverage of Sunday's release  
of a USAID-UK sponsored election poll broke heavily along partisan  
lines, with pro-GOA outlets touting the findings and pro-opposition

outlets largely ignoring the poll altogether. (NOTE: The poll gives  
the ruling Democratic Party a 43-34 percent lead over the opposition  
Socialist Party. END NOTE) One majthe poll, telQQn TV gave heavy coverage to  
the poll results, along with the  
small circulation "Koha Jone" newspaper, which referred to the  
"U.S.-U.K. poll", ignoring altogether the two local NGOs and U.S.  
polling firm which actually released the poll.  
While on the Left Wing, Mainly Silence

-----  
¶3. (SBU) Pro-SP outlets such as Top Channel, Vizion-Plus TV, and  
print outlet Shqip, on the other hand, largely ignored the poll  
altogether, claiming (correctly) that they only provide coverage to  
polls they themselves sponsor.

¶4. (SBU) Finally, newspaper Panorama, which supports former PM Ilir  
Meta's Movement for Socialist Integration (LSI) provided the most  
straightforward coverage of the poll, describing it as "a U.S.-U.K.  
financed poll". (NOTE: It's no surprise that Panorama provided the  
most nuanced coverage of the poll results. Ilir Meta never misses  
an opportunity to take a dig at SP Leader Edi Rama. But at the same  
time, Meta and Panorama can't trumpet the results too much and risk  
offending LSI's left-wing base by seeming to favor PM Berisha's  
Democratic Party.)

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: All in all, coverage of the poll turned out to be  
less than expected, with most of the coverage limited to a  
relatively small handful of pro-GOA media outlets. The GOA itself  
encouraged wide coverage of the poll, with the GOA Spokesperson  
sending out text messages on Sunday alerting the media to the poll  
release.